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Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 02673 141141Z

11
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
---------- 061285
O 141052Z APR 76
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1066

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 2673

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM TOON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, LE, US, SY, IS
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SUTIATION

REF: DAMASCUS 22190

1. WHILE I THINK MURPHY'S AIM IS LAUDABLE IN TRYING TO PUT THE SYRIAN MOVE INTO LEBANON INTO PERSPECTIVE, I WOULD HAVE THE MOST SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE COURSE OF ACTION SUGGESTED IN PARA 5 OF HIS MESSAGE, NAMELY, THAT WE SHOULD "PLAY A BIT OF A GAME OF MIRRORS WITH THE ISRAELIS" SO THAT THEY DO NOT REACT MILITARILY AGAINST THE SYRIANS.

2. THE ISRAELI MILITARY AUTHORITIES HAVE, OF COURSE, BEEN WATCHING THE SYRIAN MOVEMENTS LIKE THE HAWKS THEY ARE; BASED ON THEIR AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY THEY TOLD US EARLIER THIS WEEK THEY HAD COUNTED A TOTAL OF 54 TANKS IN THE SYRIAN BRIGADE THEN STRADDLING THE LEBANESE-SYRIAN BORDER. TO TRY TO TALK THEM OUT OF WHAT THEY HAVE SEEN WOULD NOT APPEAR TO BE A VERY PROFITABLE EXERCISE.

3. RATHER, I STRONGLY URGE THAT WE CONTINUE OUR CLOSE CONTACTS WITH THEISRAELI AUTHORITIES AND BE AS FORTH-COMING AS WE CAN IN OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE DEVELOPING SITUATION. IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS THEY ARE PROBABLY IN A BETTER POSITION THAN WE, AT LEAST AT THE AMEBASSY IN TEL
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AVIV, TO PLAY GAMES ON SYRIAN MILITARY DISPOSITIONS AND

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ACTIVITIES.
TOON

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